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# The Anti-Slavery Reporter.

JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1904.

[*The Editor, whilst grateful to all correspondents who may be kind enough to furnish him with information, desires to state that he is not responsible for the views stated by them, nor for quotations which may be inserted from other journals. The object of the REPORTER is to spread information, and articles are necessarily quoted which may contain views or statements for which their authors can alone be held responsible.*]

## The Transvaal Labour Question.

THE question of the importation of Chinese labour for the Rand mines has been forced upon Parliament and the country with precipitate haste, and the momentous and most deplorable decision of the Imperial Government to allow the Draft Ordinance of the Transvaal Legislative Council has called forth spirited and widespread protests both in the Press and in Parliament, which will, we believe, continue to grow in number and volume, as the people at large come to realize the nature of the policy to which the country is recklessly committed. A number of Parliamentary papers have been issued one on the top of another, dealing with the reports of the Johannesburg Labour Commission and the introduction of Chinese labourers; but, on the plea of immediate necessity, no opportunity was granted by the Government for the discussion of the subject in the House of Commons before final sanction was given to the Ordinance except by way of amendment to the Address, when party ties are held to be paramount. Many questions have, however, been put to Ministers on the subject, and on February 22nd it was further debated in the Commons on a motion for adjournment as "a definite matter of urgent public importance." These debates, in addition to one in the House of Lords, have led to vigorous exposition and discussion of the whole question, which has been actively taken up in the country outside, and the important meetings of protest held at the Queen's Hall and elsewhere are being followed by similar meetings in different parts of London and the Provinces. The opposition is no mere partisan movement, as is clear from the attitude of many supporters of the Government; the fact is that the deliberate decision to import gangs of yellow labourers from China to South Africa for the sole purpose of "unskilled labour in the exploitation of minerals" under the extensive and severe restrictions set forth in the Ordinance, is a most serious reversal of the traditional policy of this country.

The correspondent of *The Times* in Johannesburg, who has throughout ardently supported the demand for Asiatics, has pointed out "what little prospect there would have been of overcoming outside prejudices without the weight of Lord Milner's influence."

It is indeed a dramatic stroke of irony that the statesman whose strongly-worded despatches as to the position of "helots" occupied by the unenfranchised Uitlanders of the Transvaal had much to do with bringing about a war which cost the Empire so dear, is the very man who has used all his influence to induce the Imperial Government to allow the importation from over sea of indentured low-class Chinese labourers whose position is to be that of helots in literal earnest!

The Colonial Secretary displayed great indignation in Parliament at the imputation of slavery in connection with the introduction of Chinese labourers. But its advocates are in a dilemma; either the Chinese are to be allowed to enter the country freely and voluntarily—in which case experience of their introduction into America and Australia has abundantly shown that they quickly become dangerous competitors in all sorts of petty trades and overspread the country, causing serious social mischief and tending to oust the white man altogether—or they must, from the beginning, be securely indentured, and closely restrained by the strictest regulations possible; in other words, they must be simply "animated machines." It is the latter alternative, of course, which the authorities have chosen to adopt, and the discussion whether these restrictions do or do not amount to actual slavery is a mere quibbling about words. It seems enough that the Chinese Ambassador, in a despatch which has been published,\* thought it necessary to suggest certain modifications in the terms of the Draft Ordinance, "in order to prevent the immigrant from being made a mere chattel or article of commerce." For the character of the restrictions, we refer readers to the notice of the Blue Book (Cd. 1895) on another page, but there have already been at least three editions of the Ordinance, and, as we go to press, further Regulations, which have not yet been published, are under consideration; these the Government decline to allow to be discussed in Parliament before the Ordinance comes into operation. Many important points are left to be dealt with in these Regulations, including that relating to the introduction of the wives and children of labourers.

We are told that we must trust Lord Milner and the Transvaal Executive—the very last thing which those who have carefully followed the course of this question, and know the way in which it has been forced on by the mine-owning interest and the authorities, can feel able to do. Moreover, as has been admirably said by Mr. Asquith in Parliament, the House is a trustee for the whole community of the Transvaal Colony and cannot rightly delegate its functions to a local Legislature, in defiance, it would appear, of the large body of *independent* public opinion in the Transvaal (the Government will not allow a referendum on the subject), and certainly in defiance of a great volume of popular opinion in this country. But when the step is once taken, and vested interests created, it will be far more difficult to go back.

It is needless here to recapitulate in full the arguments which are used as to the necessity of providing Chinese labour for the mines. The country, it is

said, is crying out for more labour, and the mines in particular cannot be worked without a large addition of cheap coloured labour ; cheapness is essential, else the low-grade mines will have to be closed, and for the same reason it is impossible to wait. Yet the figures show that the mining industry is steadily improving, and the output of gold is going up almost every month, while in spite of all the drawbacks of the past years the mining companies are able to pay very large dividends. Moreover, it is admitted that the black labour supply also is steadily, if slowly, increasing, and the rate of wages, though it has been raised, is not yet so high as before the war. While the reports of the Labour Commission show that the majority consider the native supply to be insufficient, and white labour to be impracticable, the first point is more than doubtful, and, on the second, expert evidence is, to say the least, conflicting. The objection to white labour is largely a political one, as is made clear by the frank statements of Mr. Rudd, and of Mr. Percy Tarbutt in the now famous letter addressed to Mr. Creswell last July. The yellow labourer will not want a vote, consequently the ultimate welfare of the whole community is to be sacrificed for the immediate profit of an influential and wealthy class, and, without waiting until the colony is self-governing and the voice of the people can be expressed, its civilization is to be built up on the industry of a coloured proletariat—an isolated serf class. The history of past empires has sufficiently shown the insecurity of a society so founded, and the serious moral and social evils inseparable from it. As Mr. Creswell has pointed out, anything approaching to slavery is an unmitigated curse, and has an utterly demoralizing effect upon those who hold their fellow-creatures in servitude.

The outlook is a dark one, not only for the colony, but for the reputation of our country, if this measure is finally sanctioned and brought into operation.

An example of the difficulty of receding from a policy once embarked upon may be seen by what is happening in regard to the labour of Central Africa natives.

In a suggestive and temperate article in the *Independent Review* for January, the Rev. J. S. Mofat discusses Native Labour in South Africa, and after stating briefly the case for the white employer remarks that the black man has been practically inarticulate, and it is important to endeavour to hear the opinion of those who represent the natives, regardless of the cry of "Exeter Hall," which is promptly raised against those who show the least inclination to state this side of the question fairly. After all, Mr. Mofat points out that there is a not inconsiderable body of colonists who hold these views, and many of them are to be found in the Native Departments of the States.

"The overwhelming balance of official influence in the various Native Departments in South Africa is much nearer to that of what is often called the 'negrophilist party' in Great Britain, than it is to the fretful and feverish impatience of those who, in South Africa, dash themselves against the blind wall of a deficient labour supply, which hampers the onward rush of the gold industry."

The usual reason assigned for the difficulty of getting native labour (and Mr. Moffat grants that it is an open question whether a supply *sufficient to meet the views of the mine-owners* is to be had in South Africa) is that the native is inherently lazy, and lives on the toil of his slave-wives, of whom he desires many. But provided work is to be had within reasonable distance, and he has some security for good treatment, the native is by no means unwilling to work. As for polygamy,

"Those who talk of polygamy must be misinformed about the facts, or must be dealing very largely in imaginative assumption. . . . Polygamy is a dying usage, and, as a fact seriously affecting the labour supply, may be safely dismissed as a mere figment of the imagination."

Mr. Moffat assures us that those who take an interest in the native have no desire, as is often assumed in the Press, to encourage him to live without labour, nor do they wish to see the community hampered by a dearth of the desired supply.

But they know that there are better ways of inducing the natives to work than by excessive taxation or by filching his lands on however plausible a pretext.

Among difficulties which confront the native seeking work are the difficulties of travel on foot over hundreds of miles through possibly hostile peoples; again, on railway journeys they are not uncommonly packed for days in the open trucks of a goods train, without shelter from weather, abused by railway employés, and able with difficulty to get supplies of food on the way. Pass regulations, however necessary, are an evil, and subordinate officials enforce them harshly. Then again, wretched quarters and bad or unsuitable food naturally deter the native from the mines:—

"Even a native has some idea of comfort; but there are thousands of natives at the labour centres and in private employ who are housed (if such a word is not ironical) in a way that would, in the cases of horses or dogs, be regarded as a scandal. The result is, not only that the native soon wearies of the discomfort, if not the absolute misery of his surroundings, but goes away in such a condition that he only reaches his distant home in time to die, or lives the rest of his life permanently disabled by rheumatism or pulmonary disease."

It is true that the authorities are endeavouring to reform many of these abuses, but "it must be repeated, the effects are slow, and reform will only bear fruit gradually." Mr. Moffat reminds us again—and the reminder is by no means superfluous—that the native peoples are under no moral obligation to lay themselves out for the service of the white man; they do not beg for support as paupers, but for the most part farm the land to which they have an indefeasible title.

Lastly, Mr. Moffat puts the case of the ordinary South African colonist who has nothing to do with mines, and who, while he recognizes the benefits that the mining industry has brought with it, dislikes the perpetual high pressure of

business, and does not see why this industry should be "rushed at express speed," with little or no thought of other natural industries of the country :—

"He would like to see a return of the times when his modest income would go a little further than it does now. Not being a possessor of mining stock, or a highly paid, perhaps too highly paid, official of a mining company, he cannot quite enter into the feverish impatience of those whose dominant thought is a large dividend. He sees that the determination, so apparent, to extract at the very earliest moment every ounce of gold from the soil, is making the gold industry an exceedingly expensive one, draining dry what would otherwise be a reasonable labour supply, and involving the importation from over-sea of a great part of the necessities of life.

"South Africa needs more people for its work, hence this demand for the importation of Asiatics. But she needs the men on her own land, and not locked up in the mining centres."

## THE IMPORTATION OF CENTRAL AFRICA NATIVES.

In the course of the debate on Imported Labour in the Transvaal Legislative Council at the end of last year, the Commissioner of Native Affairs (Sir G. Lagden) thus referred to the experiment of getting natives from Nyasaland for the Rand Mines. We take his words from the report of the debate sent by Lord Milner to the Colonial Secretary :—

One hundred and eighty-eight out of three hundred natives were taken ill at an unseasonable period, but everything was done for the boys, and they came very well out of the epidemic of illness. However, these boys did not appreciate the kindness shown them, and they subsequently struck work. They had been duly and legally contracted for in Central Africa, and there was no flaw in the whole case. They were obstructive, insolent, and generally misbehaved themselves, there was a sort of rebellion, and he had no alternative but to put the case into the hands of the resident magistrate, with the result that some 88 of the boys were convicted and sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment. At the end of the third day of their imprisonment he ascertained that the culprits were in a penitent frame of mind, and he obtained a remission of their sentence at the hands of the Lieutenant-Governor. The men were released and were sent back to the mine, where they conversed with their fellows who had remained above ground all the time, and the result was that the next morning they all went down to work, and since then they had done all the work required of them.

Reports had lately been circulated through the press by mine managers to the effect that the Central African boys were a failure. The mine manager had a perfect right to say that he had his shareholders to consider and that he could not produce adequate profits with that class of labour, but he (Sir Godfrey) was sorry it had happened. . . . He did not agree that natives from any particular part of Africa could not be made to work in any other part.

If their conditions of life were properly studied and patience was used, these men from Central Africa would be as tractable and amenable to work in the mines as the natives of South Africa. It would take time and it might be a costly experiment. . . .

We greatly regret to see by Lord Percy's answers to questions put in the House of Commons last month, that the Government has sanctioned the recruiting of 5,000 more natives of British Central Africa for the Rand. The original permission to recruit 1,000 men was granted by the Foreign Secretary a year ago with a certain reluctance, and the country was assured that the Government would watch the experiment most carefully, and would "draw in its horns" if any of the evils which were anticipated seemed to be resulting. The experiment turned out in large measure a failure; the recruiting was carried on with difficulty, and it was found that the natives could not stand the change to the climate of the Rand. An epidemic of influenza broke out amongst them, from which a considerable number died. Yet in face of the facts the Government proposes to open the doors still wider by giving permission for a far larger number to be recruited from the British Central Africa Protectorate.

## Chinese Labour for the Mines.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.\*

THE first impression derived from reading this mass of despatches which are mainly concerned with the labour question, is of the very strong feeling which existed in South Africa last year against the importation of Chinese indentured labourers, and expressed itself in resolutions passed at public meetings and in deputations to Lord Milner, which were duly reported by him to the Colonial Office, and appear in these pages.

The most important of these meetings was that held in the Wanderers' Hall, Johannesburg, in April, 1903, when a strong resolution against the importation was passed by 5,000 votes to 2. Other declarations of opinion on the same side came from the African Labour League, the Witwatersrand Trades Council, and the Boers assembled at Heidelberg, while clearly-worded resolutions from Cape Colony passed by bodies official and non-official, forwarded by the Governor to the Colonial Office, recur at intervals throughout this book, and leave no room for doubt of the nature and force of public opinion at the Cape on this subject. It is true that Lord Milner also forwarded resolutions in favour of Asiatic labour, but on examination we notice that these were passed at meetings organized by the Labour Importation Association, held under the immediate influence of the mine-owners, and almost all of them on the actual premises of the mines.

We have referred to this feeling as prevailing in the Transvaal last year because Lord Milner, in a telegram to the Colonial Office on January 3rd last, reporting the debate in the Legislative Council, contends that "a great change

\* Cd. 1895.

† Cd. 1899.

has come over public opinion," which, having been violently opposed to Asiatic labour, has now "turned decisively" in the contrary direction, and goes so far as to say that "those who carry their aversion to Asiatics to the point of refusing to admit them as indentured labourers, under condition of repatriation, even in the face of a proved insufficiency of other labour, are a small minority both among Boer and British." He sees "no signs of active opposition" to the decision of the Legislative Council in favour of Asiatic labour, and mentions as an example the failure of the meeting held in the Wanderers' Hall on December 14th, when the "opponents of Asiatic labour were obliged to fall back on a ticket meeting of 200 people in a small hall." The instance is an unfortunate one, as it is now known that at the meeting in question a deliberate, carefully organized, and successful attempt was made by the pro-Asiatic party to shout down the speakers and break up the meeting by force. A vivid and realistic account of this meeting is given in the Blue Book from the *Star* newspaper report, in which, after references to "the boisterous element," "a hullabaloo," and "a medley of indescribable noise," we are told that "the men had come in determined to oppose any attempt to prevent the introduction of imported labour, and to oppose it in their own way."

It has been stated without contradiction that the miners who sang and shouted for several consecutive hours in order to make speaking impossible were hired rowdies who openly claimed their pay next day at the offices of the mining companies.

Lord Milner's bias in favour of importation is so evident from the pages of these books, and especially in the despatch referred to, that we cannot admit his theory of the complete revulsion of feeling which has taken place throughout the Transvaal on the subject to be a convincing one. In his view, there is "no shadow of a doubt," and "the weight of argument" (he is referring to the debate in the Legislative Council) "is completely on one side." Lord Milner dismisses the whole of the strenuous and determined opposition to the scheme offered by the Cape Colony as "quite clearly due to electioneering," though he allows that there is a minority consisting of men of unquestionable sincerity whose opposition springs from principle.

The mine-owning influence has been exerted to the very utmost to secure the desired importation of Chinese, and it is difficult to over-estimate the power and far-reaching character of that influence in the Transvaal. We have seen it stated that the bulk of population is utterly weary of the struggle against the power and determination of the "Magnates" to obtain their purpose, and that the apparent withdrawal of opposition is due to a feeling of the hopelessness of attempting any longer to withstand them. This explanation is at least as plausible as the revolution in public opinion of which Lord Milner has convinced himself.

A very important statement of his views was made by Lord Milner to a deputation of the White League who approached him in June, 1903, to protest

by the Chamber of Mines was adopted, which permitted the natives to earn up to 60s. per month. Further, it was also agreed to adopt the schedule of wages in vogue immediately prior to the outbreak of war, and that 'time expired' natives should be offered a bonus for a further twelve months' contract.

"It is apparent that the higher rate of wage now offered, the great improvement in the housing accommodation and rations provided, the extra freedom granted to the natives in allowing them to choose their own mines on coming to these fields, has had a most beneficial effect."

The same report refers to "a general tendency on the part of the Mining Companies to treat their coloured employés in a much more generous manner than has hitherto been the case."

This is, in our view, the right direction in which to attack the problem of the inadequate labour supply, and one which if followed would, *in time*, lead to its satisfactory solution.

We have not space to refer here to the debate in the Legislative Council on Sir George Farrar's motion at the end of last year, which is reported in this volume *verbatim*, but simply refer, in closing, to Mr. Lyttelton's telegram of January 16th to Lord Milner, in which he states:—

"His Majesty's Government, in view of your earnest advice and the information by which you support it, will not withhold sanction to the introduction of the Ordinance, a draft of which you have published."

The Ordinance, Mr. Lyttelton says, is to be reserved until the Government have ascertained the views of the Chinese Government on its provisions. Apparently, Parliament and the country do not count.

## Parliamentary.

*House of Commons, February 4th.*

### NATIVE LABOUR FROM CENTRAL AFRICA.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Foreign Office had been drawn to the statement, quoted in paragraph 66 of the majority report of the Transvaal Labour Commission, to the effect that the natives of the British Central Africa Protectorate, imported into the Transvaal to work in the mines, had proved very unsatisfactory as labourers, and had been dying of pneumonia at a rate which was equal to a rate of 28 per cent. per annum; whether this mortality still continued; and whether the Foreign Secretary would prohibit the recruitment of other labourers in British Central Africa and would arrange for the repatriation of the survivors.

Earl PERCY: We are aware of the statement alluded to. The question has formed the subject of personal investigation by Lord Milner since his return to South Africa. His report shows that of the deaths which had occurred up to December 31 amongst the British Central Africa natives in the mines a large proportion was due to an epidemic of influenza which broke out at the time of their arrival. The tenor of his report and of others previously

received is not such as in the opinion of the Secretary of State would justify him in altogether prohibiting further recruiting under adequate safeguards, and this opinion has been confirmed by the evidence of the protectorate officer who accompanied the last recruits. Some of the earlier emigrants have already returned to the Protectorate. The rest will return at the expiration of their year's contract.

*February 11th.*

Mr. WEIR asked the Secretary for the Colonies if he would state how many of the 1000 natives recruited last summer from the British Central Africa Protectorate for labour in the Transvaal mines have arrived at their destination, and the nature of their engagement and rate of pay.

Earl PERCY: The number of natives who had arrived in the Transvaal at the beginning of this year was 818. The nature of their engagement and rate of pay will be found in Africa No. 2 (1903).

*February 15th.*

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the Government had sanctioned the recruiting of 5,000 more natives in the British Central Africa Protectorate for the Transvaal mines; and under what terms was it proposed that they should be recruited.

Earl PERCY: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. The conditions of recruitment are given in Africa No. 2, 1903, but it has been decided that recruiting shall in future be confined to the colder regions of the Central Africa Protectorate, and that the arrival in the Transvaal of those who may enlist shall be postponed until August.

*February 23rd.*

Mr. PEEL asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether authority had been given for the recruiting for the Transvaal mines of 5,000 natives in the British Central Africa Protectorate; and whether he was aware that, in consequence of the want of labour, the work upon the railway in course of construction in the Protectorate had come to a standstill.

Earl PERCY: The answer to the first part of the question, as I stated in reply to the hon. member for Aberdeen on the 15th inst., is in the affirmative. We have received no information of the character indicated in the second part of the question.

*February 25th.*

Mr. C. McARTHUR asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he was aware that cotton planting in Central Africa was being retarded by the scarcity of labour; and whether, having regard to the importance of encouraging the growth of cotton within the British Empire, he would reconsider the sanction given by him to the recruiting in the British Central Africa Protectorate of 5,000 natives for the Transvaal mines.

Earl PERCY: The reports received from our officials in British Central Africa do not indicate that there is any scarcity of labour. His Majesty's

Government, therefore, see no reason to reconsider the sanction which they have given to additional recruitment for the Transvaal mines.

**Mr. EMMOTT:** In case evidence can be put before the Foreign Office of there being a shortage of labour, will the attempt to recruit be delayed until the matter has been considered?

**Earl PERCY:** There is no intention of sending the labourers to the Transvaal before August at the earliest.

## The Abuses in the Congo State.

### PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.\*

THE promised report of Mr. Roger Casement, British Consul at Boma, after his journey of investigation on the Upper Congo, respecting the State Administration, was published in the middle of February, and is a document of the highest importance. It is prefaced by a significant extract from a despatch from Lord Cromer to the Foreign Office, dated January 7th, 1903, in which that distinguished public servant records some impressions he derived as to the Belgian positions on the Upper Nile. Lord Cromer writes:—

"I had heard so many and such contradictory accounts of the Belgian Administration that I was very desirous of ascertaining some concise and definite evidence on this subject. During a hurried visit, and with opportunities of observation confined to the banks of the river, I scarcely anticipated that I should be able to arrive at any independent opinion on the point at issue. I saw and heard, however, quite enough to gain an insight into the spirit which pervades the Administration. . . . I cannot say that I had an opportunity of seeing a full 80 miles of Belgian territory. At the same time, I saw a good deal, and I noticed that, whereas there were numerous villages and huts on the eastern bank and on the islands, on the Belgian side not a sign of a village existed. Indeed, I do not think that any one of our party saw a single human being in Belgian territory, except the Belgian officers and men and the wives and children of the latter. Moreover, not a single native was to be seen either at Kiro or Lado. . . ."

"The reason of all this is obvious enough. The Belgians are disliked. The people fly from them, and it is no wonder they should do so, for I am informed that the soldiers are allowed full liberty to plunder, and that payments are rarely made for supplies. The British officers wander, practically alone, over most parts of the country, either on tours of inspection or on shooting expeditions. I understand that no Belgian officer can move outside the settlements without a strong guard.

"It appears to me that the facts which I have stated above afford amply sufficient evidence of the spirit which animates the Belgian Administration, if, indeed, Administration it can be called. The Government, so far as I could judge, is conducted almost exclusively on commercial principles, and, even judged by that standard, it would appear that those principles are somewhat short-sighted."

The long despatch of the Congo Government in answer to the British Note to the Powers contains a reference to "the not unimportant fact that the English Consul who has resided in the Congo since 1901 does not appear to support, by his personal authority, the accusations of private individuals." How very wide of the mark this inference was is now shown by the publication of Mr. Casement's report, which may be briefly said to support all the heads of accusation which have been brought by so many private witnesses against the system of Administration of the Congo State.

The Consul's journey in the Upper Congo district occupied two and a half months, and the region he visited was one of the most central and most productive in the State, so that it cannot be said to be an unfair example of the general methods of the Administration, or remote for its authorized rule.

Now previous witnesses have told us of the oppressive and cruel exactions which are systematically made upon the natives by the Concessionaire Companies, of the terrible "Rubber" system, of the savage native soldiery called the *Force Publique*, and of the general depopulation of the country which has resulted from the barbarous and pitiless administration by the State which at its initiation professed especially to aim at "the moral and material regeneration" of the natives. All these charges are fully endorsed by what the British Consul has seen in the interior, and here relates without concealment, and in detail. We can only here quote a few extracts bearing on different phases of the Administrative system and its results, with the assurance that these are but samples of many other quotations that might be made from this terrible report, referring readers to the white paper itself for the full statement of the Consul's experiences.

#### DEPOPULATION.

As regards the depopulation of the country, which has so often been remarked upon, Mr. Casement refers to the sleeping sickness, "which is, all too rapidly, eating its way into the heart of Africa," as one of the causes of the reduction in the population of the Lower Congo, but states that the people attribute it to other causes as well. He continues:—

"Perhaps the most striking change observed during my journey into the interior was the great reduction observable everywhere in native life. Communities I had formerly known as large and flourishing centres of population are to-day entirely gone, or now exist in such diminished numbers as to be no longer recognizable. The southern shores of Stanley Pool had formerly a population of fully 5,000 Batekes, distributed through the three towns of Ngaliema's (Léopoldville), Kinchasa, and Ndolo, lying within a few miles of each other. These people, some twelve years ago, decided to abandon their homes, and in one night the great majority of them crossed over into the French territory on the north shores of Stanley Pool. Where formerly had stretched these populous native African villages I saw to-day only a few scattered European houses, belonging either to Government officials or local traders."

Several other examples are given, and of a settlement which, in August, 1887, contained from 4,000 to 5,000 people, Mr. Casement writes that the villages are now entirely deserted, and the whole community only numbers about 500.

In referring to the same feature in the Lake Mantumba district he points to the real cause :—

"The population of the lake-side towns would seem to have diminished within the last ten years by 60 or 70 per cent. It was in 1893 that the effort to levy an india-rubber imposition in this district was begun, and for some four or five years this imposition could only be collected at the cost of continual fighting. Finding the task of collecting india-rubber a well-nigh impossible one, the authorities abandoned it in this district. . . .

"A careful investigation of the conditions of native life around the lake confirmed the truth of the statements made to me—that the great decrease in population, the dirty and ill-kept towns, and the complete absence of goats, sheep, or fowls—once very plentiful in this country—were to be attributed above all else to the continued effort made during many years to compel the natives to work india-rubber. Large bodies of native troops had formerly been quartered in the district, and the punitive measures undertaken to this end had endured for a considerable period. During the course of these operations there had been much loss of life, accompanied, I fear, by a somewhat general mutilation of the dead, as proof that the soldiers had done their duty. Each village I visited around the lake, save that of Q\* and one other, had been abandoned by its inhabitants."

Here is an extract from Mr. Casement's account of the working of the system in the territory of one of the great Concessionaire Companies :—

#### THE CONCESSIONAIRE SYSTEM.

"The A.B.I.R. Society effectually controls the movements of the natives both by water as well as by land. Since almost every village in the Concession is under control, its male inhabitants are entered in books, and according to age and strength have to furnish rubber or, in the villages close to the factory, food-stuffs, such as antelope meat or wild pig (which the elders are required to hunt), as also the customary kwanga bread, or bananas, and fowls and ducks. An agent showed me some of these village lists, during the purchasing of the rubber, of the 242 E\*\* men, explaining that the impositions against the individuals named are fixed by the Government, and are calculated on the bodily service each man owes it, but from which he is exempted in the Concession in order to work rubber and assist the progressive development of the A.B.I.R. Company's territory. He added that it was not the few guns he disposed of at F\*\* which compelled obedience to this law, but the power of the Congo State *Force Publique*, which, if a village absolutely refuses obedience, would be sent to punish the district to compel respect to these civilized rights. He added that, as the punishment inflicted in these cases was terribly severe, it was better that the milder measures and the other expedients he was forced to resort to should not be interfered with. These measures, he said, involved frequent imprisonment of individuals in his local 'house of hostages.' A truly recalcitrant man, he said, who proved enduringly obstinate in his failure to bring in his allotted share of rubber, would in the end be brought to reason by these means."

Various explanations were offered to the Consul for the armed forces employed in the service of the Companies and for their drastic methods of dealing with the natives. Every explanation was contradicted by the next, but

"The summing up of the situation by the majority of those with whom I sought to discuss it was that, in fact, it was forced labour conceived in the true interest of the native, who, if not controlled in this way, would spend his days in idleness,

unprofitable to himself and the general community. The collection of the products of the soil by the more benevolent methods adopted by the Trading Companies was, in any case, preferable to those the Congo Government would itself employ to compel obedience to this law, and therefore if I saw women and children seized as hostages and kept in detention until rubber or other things were brought in, it was better that this should be done by the cap-gun of the 'forest guard' than by the Albini armed soldiers of the Government, who, if once impelled into a district, would overturn the entire country side."

"ON ACCOUNT OF RUBBER."

Another striking instance of the working of this infamous system in a town lying somewhat off the beaten track, and carried out by a company which is neither a Concession Company nor endowed with any "rights of police," is thus related by Mr. Casement :—

"Steaming up a small tributary of the Lulongo, I arrived, unpreceded by any rumour of my coming, at the village of A\*\*. In an open shed I found two sentries of the La Lulanga Company guarding fifteen native women, five of whom had infants at the breast, and three of whom were about to become mothers. The chief of these sentries, a man called S—who was bearing a double-barrelled shotgun, for which he had a belt of cartridges—at once volunteered an explanation of the reason for these women's detention. Four of them, he said, were hostages who were being held to insure the peaceful settlement of a dispute between two neighbouring towns, which had already cost the life of a man. His employer, the agent of the La Lulanga Company at B\*\* near by, he said, had ordered these women to be seized and kept until the Chief of the offending town to which they belonged should come in to talk over the palaver. . . . The remaining eleven women, whom he indicated, he said he had caught, and was detaining as prisoners to compel their husbands to bring in the right amount of india-rubber required of them on next market day. When I asked if it was a woman's work to collect india-rubber, he said, 'No; that, of course, it was man's work.' 'Then why do you catch the women and not the men?' I asked. 'Don't you see,' was the answer, 'if I caught and kept the men, who would work the rubber? But if I catch their wives the husbands are anxious to have them home again, and so the rubber is brought in quickly and quite up to the mark.' When I asked what would become of those women if their husbands failed to bring in the right quantity of rubber on the next market day, he said at once that then they would be kept there until their husbands had redeemed them. . . . They came from more than one village of the neighbourhood, he said, mostly from the Ngombi or inland country, where he often had to catch women to insure the rubber being brought in in sufficient quantity. It was an institution, he explained, that served well and saved much trouble. When his master came each fortnight to A\*\* to take away the rubber so collected, if it was found to be sufficient, the women were released and allowed to return with their husbands, but if not sufficient they would undergo continued detention. The sentry's statements were clear and explicit, as were equally those of several of the villagers with whom I spoke. The sentry further explained, in answer to my inquiry, that he caught women in this way by direction of his employers. That it was a custom generally adopted, and found to work well; that the people were very lazy, and this was much the simplest way of making them do what was required of them. When asked if he had any use for his shot-gun, he answered that it had been given him by the white man 'to frighten

people and make them bring in rubber,' but that he had never otherwise used it. I found that the two sentries at A\*\* were complete masters of the town. . . . At nightfall the fifteen women in the shed were tied together, either neck to neck or ankle to ankle, to secure them for the night, and in this posture I saw them twice during the evening. They were then trying to huddle around a fire. In the morning the leading sentry, before leaving the village, ordered his companion in my hearing to 'keep close guard on the prisoners!'

#### NATIVE BURDENS.

As to the vexatious exactions imposed on the people Mr. Casement says much, but we have only space for one extract. The complaints of the natives are, he says, more of the manner of exacting service than of the requirement itself. Men and women alike are summoned at a moment's notice to paddle the local official's canoe or weed his garden, and a refusal entails beating or imprisonment.

"The F\* villages have to supply kwanga (the prepared cassava root already referred to) for the neighbouring wood-cutting post, and the quantity required of them is, they asserted, in excess of their means of supply and out of proportion to the value received in exchange. The supply required of them was fixed, I found, at 380 kwanga (or boiled cassava puddings) every six days, each pudding weighing from 4½ lb. to 6 lb., or a total of from 1,700 lb. to 1 ton weight of carefully prepared food-stuffs per week. For this a payment of one brass rod per kwanga is made, giving a sum of 19 fr. in all for the several villages whose task it is to keep the wood post victualled. These villages, by careful computation, I reckoned contained 240 persons all told—men, women, and children. In addition to preparing and carrying this food a considerable distance to the Government post, these people have to take their share in keeping the telegraph line clear and in supplying Government workmen. The number of wood-cutters at the local post is about thirty I was informed, so that the amount of food levied is beyond their requirements, and the excess is said to be sold by them at a profit to the crews of passing steamers. At one of the smallest of these F\* villages, where there are not more than ten persons all told, and only three of these women able to prepare and cook the food, 40 kwanga (180 lb. to 270 lb. weight of food) had to be supplied every week at a payment of 40 rods (2 fr.). These people said: 'How can we possibly plant and weed our gardens, seek and prepare and boil the cassava, make it into portable shape, and then carry it nearly a day's journey to the post? Moreover, if the kwanga we make are a little small or not well cooked, or if we complain that the rods given us in settlement are too short, as they sometimes are, then we are beaten by the wood-cutters, and sometimes we are detained several days to cut firewood as a punishment.'

"Statements of this kind might be tediously multiplied."

Mr. Casement could nowhere learn upon what legal basis, if any, the punishment inflicted on native communities or individuals for failure to comply with the various forms of "prestations" rest. These punishments are almost universal, and take many shapes from punitive expeditions on a large scale to petty fines and imprisonment. On the contrary, explicit regulations for the fair treatment of natives, and their right to judicial protection, do exist—on paper. In practice, they appear to be absolutely disregarded.

## CRUELTY.

The report is full of the cruel and savage treatment meted out to the natives by the agents of the State. Some of the most revolting of these barbarities are the mutilations inflicted, of which Mr. Casement saw many examples. One official accounted for the fear of the white men exhibited by the natives by the "awful past" which he said they had suffered at the hands of his predecessors :—

"Men, he said, still came to him whose hands had been cut off by the Government soldiers during those evil days, and he said there were still many victims of this species of mutilation in the surrounding country. Two cases of the kind came to my actual notice while I was in the lake—one, a young man, both of whose hands had been beaten off with the butt ends of rifles against a tree, the other a young lad of 11 or 12 years of age, whose right hand was cut off at the wrist. This boy described the circumstances of his mutilation, and, in answer to my inquiry, said that although wounded at the time, he was perfectly sensible of the severing of his wrist, but lay still fearing that if he moved he would be killed. In both these cases the Government soldiers had been accompanied by white officers whose names were given to me. . . . The day I left Lake Mantumba five men whose hands had been cut off came to the village of T° across the lake to see me, but hearing that I had already gone away they returned to their homes."

In another district on the Lolongo River Mr. Casement saw many other victims of the "sentries" of the La Lulanga Company similarly mutilated.

"In the morning many people from the surrounding country came in to see me. They brought with them three individuals who had been shockingly wounded by gun fire, two men and a very small boy, not more than 6 years of age, and a fourth—a boy child of 6 or 7—whose right hand was cut off at the wrist. One of the men, who had been shot through the arm, declared that he had been shot as I saw under the following circumstances: the soldiers had entered his town, he alleged, to enforce the due fulfilment of the rubber tax due by the community. These men had tied him up, and said that unless he paid 1,000 brass rods to them they would shoot him. Having no rods to give them they had shot him through the arm and had left him. The soldiers implicated were, he believed, all employés of the La Lulanga Company, and had come from Mampoko. At the time when he, Y, was shot through the arm the Chief of his town came up and begged the soldiers not to hurt him, but one of them, a man called Z, shot the Chief dead. No white man was with these sentries, or soldiers, at the time. Two of them, Y said, he believed had been sent or taken to Coquilhatville. He did not know what punishment, if any, the soldiers had received, for no inquiry had since been made in L \*\*, nor had any persons in that town been required to testify against their aggressors. This man was accompanied by four other men of his town. These four men all corroborated Y's statement."

These were followed by many more natives, who bore witness in their own persons of the horrible treatment they had received "on account of rubber," and, in a supplement, Mr. Casement gives fuller details of interviews which he had with these men, who, he feels assured, were, in spite of contradictions, stating

what they had actually seen or believed in. After giving particulars of some specific cases he writes :—

" Of acts of persistent mutilation by Government soldiers of this nature I had many statements made to me, some of them specifically, others in a general way. Of the fact of this mutilation and the causes inducing it there can be no shadow of doubt. It was not a native custom prior to the coming of the white man ; it was not the outcome of the primitive instincts of savages in their fights between village and village ; it was the deliberate act of the soldiers of a European Administration, and these men themselves never made any concealment that in committing these acts they were but obeying the positive orders of their superiors."

It is admitted by Mr. Casement that the authorities have, to a large extent, suppressed slave markets and cannibalism, but only a few years ago the Congo Government itself purchased slaves (the Consul saw the document from which he quotes), and he adds that the Government has often relied upon very savage agencies wherewith to combat savagery, the troops employed being, as they still often are, " only removed by outward garb from those whom they are sent to punish."

The extracts which we have given from this official report are sufficient to show its damning character, and they prove that our Government was more than justified in the action which it has already taken to bring the Congo misgovernment to the notice of the Powers. The report has been communicated to the Signatories of the Berlin Act, and in the memorandum affixed to the Foreign Office despatch to the British Minister at Brussels, dated February 11th last, H.M. Government, after referring to the gravity of the indictment, point out that, on the evidence submitted,

" There is ample ground for the belief that there are, at any rate, extensive regions in which the pledges given by the Berlin Act have not been fulfilled."

#### FURTHER REPORTS FROM MISSIONARIES.

Further accounts from missionaries resident in the Congo State of abominations which are perpetrated under the present régime have been forwarded to the editor of the *West African Mail* and published by him in that paper. These facts constitute important additions to the mass of first-hand evidence which has for so long been accumulating against the system of government carried on on the Congo, and which is truly said to be overwhelming.

The first account we shall refer to is that of the Rev. A. E. Scrivener, of the Baptist Missionary Society, who describes a journey which he took last summer to Lake Leopold II. in the *Domaine Privé*, into which he believes he was the first unofficial white man to enter.

Mr. Scrivener's letters were not written for publication, but for private purposes, their author having never before opened his lips as to Congo methods of rule. His story is of a country showing signs of former cultivation and prosperity, now depopulated and laid waste to an almost incredible extent ; again and again he passed through miles of deserted sites and villages, while in many settlements there were now a hundred or two of wretched

natives where there had formerly been thousands. The reason for the change is given in the one word "rubber," which, as Mr. Scrivener says in describing a station where he saw nothing that he could take much exception to, "was the theme of nearly every conversation." The methods employed to procure rubber were described by the natives of a place called Ngongo, who tried in vain to keep the white men out of their country. These demanded certain services from the people, at first offering a small reward.

"But soon the reward was reduced until at last they were told to bring in the rubber for nothing. To this they tried to demur, but to their great surprise several were shot by the soldiers, and the rest were told, with many curses and blows, to go at once or more would be killed. Terrified, they began to prepare their food for the fortnight's absence from the village which the collection of rubber entailed. The soldiers discovered them sitting about. 'What, not gone yet?' Bang! bang! bang! and down fell one and another, dead, in the midst of wives and companions. There is a terrible wail and an attempt made to prepare the dead for burial, but this is not allowed. All must go at once to the forest. Without food? Yes, without food. And off the poor wretches had to go without even their tinder boxes to make fires. Many died in the forests of exposure and hunger, and still more from the rifles of the ferocious soldiers in charge of the post. In spite of all their efforts the amount fell off, and more and more were killed. I could not hear of any white man being directly connected with this slaughter. It seems to have been the work of four or five soldiers sent to take charge of that district. I was shewn round the place, and the sites of former big chiefs' settlements were pointed out. A careful estimate made the population of, say, seven years ago, to be 2,000 people in and about the post, within a radius of, say, a quarter of a mile. All told they would not muster 200 now, and there is so much sadness and gloom about them that they are fast decreasing."

At this same place Mr. Scrivener was shown numbers of human bones, and was sickened by the tales of revolting horror committed, many of the worst of which came from present employés of the State.

Here is another account of the collection of the rubber under the prevailing system:—

"I heard from the white men and some of the soldiers some most gruesome stories. The former white man would stand at the door of the store to receive the rubber from the poor trembling wretches, who, after in some cases weeks of privation in the forests, had ventured in with what they had been able to collect. A man bringing rather under the proper amount, the white man flies into a rage, and seizing a rifle from one of the guards, shoots him dead on the spot. Very rarely did rubber come in but one or more were shot in that way at the door of the store—to make the survivors bring more next time. Men who had tried to run from the country and had been caught, were brought to the station and made to stand one behind the other, and an Albini bullet sent through them. 'A pity to waste cartridges on such wretches.' Some of the stories are unprintable, and much that I heard would never pass muster in a Court. But there were too many witnesses, and the consistencies were too many for all to be lies."

Everywhere the traveller heard similar reports of atrocious deeds, cruelty, and bloodshed, and "it all," as he says, "seemed so foolish"—to kill off the

people for failing to bring in rubber, and so cause a very much diminished output of rubber as an inevitable consequence.

The people are regarded as the property of the State for any purpose for which they may be needed. Their life is thus, to use Mr. Scrivener's phrase, "one continual grind," and their demeanour and circumstances were strong evidence of "the state of terrorism that exists, and the virtual slavery" in which they are held.

Another witness from whom letters have been published by the *West African Mail* is the Rev. J. H. Weeks, whose previous communications were alluded to in our last issue. Mr. Weeks found that absolutely no inquiry was made—much less any action taken—as the result of his remonstrances to the District Commissaire in June. He accordingly wrote again towards the end of last year pointing out how in three districts which contained a population of about 700, 22 men and women were killed by the State soldiers for no other crime than failing to pay the required quota of goats for the official table. Owing to the imposition of a food tax in 1896 which has to be paid in goats, the villages have been depleted of them, and the price of these animals has risen enormously, and often a man, woman or boy is given for a goat, as is shown by a list of persons sold and prices paid which Mr. Weeks supplies. The people were shot down unarmed, and the population of the towns named has decreased by 200 in six months.

The third account, published by the *West African Mail*, which comes from three independent sources, is of four missionaries of the Baptist Society who were coming down the Congo on the Mission steamer in November last, and on landing at a village called Yandjali found a number of native soldiers under two white officers making war on the village. The missionaries saw human bodies dismembered for cannibal purposes, with the coloured soldiers actually collecting the fragments of the remains of their victims. The missionaries having been ordered off the beach by the presiding officer, promptly reported the incident to the Commissaire with whom they entered a written protest, and a trial is promised.

## Northern Nigeria.

### PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.

IN General Sir Frederick Lugard's annual report of this Protectorate for the year 1902,\* published in January last, the High Commissioner continues the stirring story of his efforts to introduce order into chaos, and to establish British rule throughout the wide area now included in the British Protectorate.

The chief events of the year have been those connected with the Kano-Sokoto campaign, here described at some length, the general result of which was the capture of both these important towns and the incorporation of the provinces

under British control. The Protectorate now consists of 16 provinces instead of 13, and the work of the year is thus summarised by the High Commissioner:—

"The whole Protectorate has now been taken under administrative control, and it is important to recollect that by so doing we have not added new territory and new responsibilities to the Empire, but have simply recognised those which we had already accepted. My task has not been to annex new kingdoms, but to endeavour to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities to which we have pledged ourselves with regard to the territory placed under my charge."

The story of the advance on Kano and Sokoto will be read with special interest, for it will be remembered that General Lugard was officially criticised for not having let the home authorities know that a military expedition was impending. It will be seen from the report that action was not taken hastily nor without strong cause. While we do not think that the criticism was without justification, yet it is obvious that in so vast a country, at so great a distance from England, much must be left to the discretion of the officer on the spot, who in this case was a man prompt in action and quick to adapt his policy and methods to the nature of the difficulties confronting him. The impress of the High Commissioner's strong personality is marked on almost every paragraph of this report, and while all will not agree as to the character of his policy, none can fail to admire the determination and persistent courage with which he works out his aims and carries steadily on his great and arduous task.

In his report for the year 1900 the High Commissioner briefly sketched the native policy which he was endeavouring to carry out. This was, in short, to work through the native chiefs, and in particular those of the Fulani caste, insisting on their observing the fundamental laws of humanity and justice, and to appoint Residents, native courts and provincial courts to enforce the laws of the Protectorate, especially those relating to slave raiding, slave dealing and extortion. Those Emirs who refused to desist from such actions were deposed, and in each case a Fulani or other successor recognized by the people had been installed in his place.

This policy, Sir F. Lugard now states, has been steadily adhered to. Every effort has been made to utilize the abilities of the Fulani race (concerning whose history as rulers of Hausaland this report contains several valuable pages), while putting an end to the oppression and tyranny which has marked their rule hitherto.

But the High Commissioner's efforts to introduce permanent reforms availed little "so long as Kano defied the Government and Sokoto remained, in theory at least, the suzerain." Sir F. Lugard states that now that the absolutely necessary action has been successfully taken, and the King's Government is acknowledged as sole suzerain in Northern Nigeria, "it is possible to develop the policy further, and to lay down in more detail and with a firmer hand the requirements of the Administration."

This seems to be, in briefest possible form, the justification for the campaigns which have been carried out during the year in the northern part of the

Protectorate, and the reasons for the policy are further explained in the following sentence :—

"It is unfortunately true that the African savage in his primitive state can, as a rule, understand nothing but force, and regards arguments and verbal lessons as the weapons of the weak, to be listened to, for the moment and set aside when convenient. If, however, he is once convinced by coercion that the white man has power to enforce his admonitions, he will in future respect them—to some extent."

General Lugard has dwelt in a previous report upon the terrible way in which the country has been harried and depopulated by constant slave raiding. In his remarks on the position in Hausaland of the Fulani race, who have been settled in Northern Nigeria since the latter half of the 18th century, he shows how ruthlessly they destroyed even their own provinces by this passion for raiding.

#### FULANI SLAVE RAIDING.

"The truly awful desolation and destruction of life caused by this slave raiding is apparent to-day in every direction. Enormous tracts of land have gone out of cultivation, and one constantly sees the ruins of great towns now overgrown with jungle. Nigeria, once described as the most densely populated country in Africa, is to-day throughout its greater area but sparsely inhabited. Mr. Wallace, travelling through Kabba, writes : 'With regard to the depopulation of Northern Nigeria by the Fulani, which is so apparently manifest to the merest novice in the service, a traveller (in the country, for instance, between Kabba and Egga) would not, I am certain, come across 200 people *en route*, in what, even in my time, was a densely populated country. Again, in the Nassarawa country, a once fertile and populous province, one can now only view the remains and ruins of large and totally deserted towns, bearing witness to the desolation wrought by 100 years of internecine strife and slave raiding by the Fulani.' Major Sharpe, Resident of Kontagora, described his Province as denuded of all its inhabitants except old men and babies."

Such was the state of the country when the British Government took over the direct rule in 1900, and Sir F. Lugard's reports contain the record of the measures which he has taken to alter it.

This is not the place for dwelling on these measures in detail, for which those interested in the problems of African administration must be referred to the pages of the report. Sir F. Lugard there sketches at some length the inclusion of the provinces of Bornu, Bautshi and Katagum, besides Sokoto and Kano. In each case he has gone to work on the same principles, and in each has had much the same difficulties to contend with. In the northern province of Bornu an enormous area of some 60,000 square miles was brought under administrative control with little bloodshed, and the people were reported to be everywhere glad of the arrival of the British. Some friction has been caused here by French action, the frontier line being uncertain, and Sir F. Lugard having advised the Government of the need for its prompt delimitation a joint Commission has been appointed.

## THE MURDER OF CAPTAIN MOLONEY.

A sad incident of the year was the murder at Keffi of Captain Moloney, the Resident, who had endeavoured to bring order into the province, but was hampered by the raiding propensities of the ruler. This man killed him, and fled to Kano, an event which precipitated the campaign against that important centre, for, as Sir F. Lugard remarks :—

" If the life of a European can be taken with impunity the prestige of the Government would be gone, and prestige is another word for self-preservation in a country where millions are ruled by a few score."

## SLAVERY.

The High Commissioner's treatment of the institution of slavery is illustrated by the conditions which he laid down for the new ruler of Kano. After providing for law and justice, prohibiting mutilation, bribery and extortion, and laying down regulations for trade, he continues :—

" I emphatically forbade all slave raiding and all transactions in slaves, while saying that it was not my intention to interfere with the existing domestic slaves ; but these would, like any one else in the land, at any time, have a right to appeal to the Resident, and, if they proved cruelty on the part of their masters, would be liberated. We recognized, I said, no less than they did, that labouring classes must exist, and I had no desire to convert the existing farm and other labourers into vagrants, idlers and thieves, but I hoped that they would by-and-by see the advantage of paid free labour, which we considered more profitable and better than slave labour."

In the following paragraph on the general subject of slavery Sir F. Lugard frankly admits the difficulty hitherto felt of entirely suppressing slave dealing, and the theoretical inconsistency of abolishing the legal status, and yet tacitly allowing domestic slavery to continue. It is a satisfaction to know that progress has been made, and that Sir F. Lugard is thoroughly in earnest on the question.

" As regards slavery I am now able to take a much stronger line than before, in accordance with the conditions of appointment for Emirs which I have laid down in each case. Hitherto, there has been no law against dealing in slaves, other than in slaves moved from one place to another for sale, or those recently enslaved. It would have been but a pious resolution—an edict *pour rire*—to have declared the buying and selling of domestic slaves illegal, so long as the Administration was as yet unable to enforce prohibition, and slave dealing was sanctioned by the suzerain at Sokoto, the central slave market at Kano remaining beyond our control. The prohibition against all dealing in slaves has now been publicly declared, and publicly acquiesced in these capital cities themselves, and I have already submitted a new Proclamation giving effect to this edict. I do not, however, propose to interfere with the serfdom of the agricultural peasantry, or the house-born domestics of the cities, in so far as avoidance is compatible with the abolition of the 'legal status' which has already been declared. The anomaly under which the law of the Protectorate admits the right of every human creature to assert his freedom, while the executive desires not to interfere with the only existing form of labour contract, or to overturn the social system, is one which, of course, presents constant difficulties. These can only be met in a practical way by dealing with each case on its merits. The cases which present themselves fall

usually into certain classes, and with these I have dealt in a series of instructions to Residents. . . . I can only say in brief that one class of cases is really rather a question of divorce than of slavery, and can be dealt with as such by Native Courts."

Two incidents related in the Report appear to show that the natives well knew the hostile attitude of the British to all dealings in slaves. The first was when, after the capture of Kano, Colonel Morland proceeded to the slave market to carry out his orders to close it immediately, he found that the market had already "closed itself." The second incident took place after the occupation of Sokoto when many hundreds of slaves persisted, in spite of prohibitions, in crowding into the British camp and following the troops. Their presence put the General in a difficult position, for he was unable to feed these crowds, and in front of the army lay a waterless stretch of desert. Moreover, he had promised not to interfere with existing domestic slaves, and their departure would make Sokoto a social ruin. Sir F. Lugard's task was, as he says, a "very disagreeable" one; he thus relates the sequel:—

"There was nothing to be done but to send these poor wretches back, and instruct the Resident to inquire into all deserving cases. We did so, and presently found that the King of Gober, who was following me with an army of 300 or 400 wild horsemen of the desert, had appropriated all he could catch. We made him disgorge them, and set them at liberty to return. Doubtless very many bolted to neighbouring towns, but I considered my obligations of honour and of necessity were satisfied when I turned them out of my own following, and I did not inquire too curiously what became of them."

#### FREED SLAVES' HOME.

It will be remembered that a Home for Freed Slave Children has been established for some two or three years, but this Report states that it was only put on a proper basis during the year under review. 173 inmates were received in the course of 1902, but the death roll has been very heavy owing to the starved condition of the children on their arrival, who often die before they can be restored to health. Further, there was no place to put the children, but this has now been remedied, and the health of the children and the sanitation are reported satisfactory. Sir Frederick Lugard expects to have a new Home under his own eye shortly, and looks for a very great improvement in the conditions.

The High Commissioner writes thus concerning the

#### NUMBER FREED.

"It is impossible to render a return of the total number of slaves freed during the year. At the capture of Ibrahim of Kontagora, some thousands of newly enslaved persons were freed. The Muri province, from which 74 of the children at the Home were received, reports a total of 543. In Bornu I learn that in addition to the adults who have gone to their homes, about 200 children and others are on their way down. 'The occupation of Kano,' writes the Resident, 'has dealt a severe blow to the slave trade from Bornu,' e.g., from Baghirmi and Adamawa *via* Dikwa."

## NATURE OF TRADE.

As regards the trade of the Protectorate, Sir Frederick Lugard remarks that the imports are exclusively of a useful kind ; the trade which is being developed is in substitution of the slave traffic, which has hitherto been the staple business of Northern Nigeria.

"These points," he writes, "are worth recalling, for, although Northern Nigeria has cost, and is yearly costing, the British taxpayer a very large sum of money, it is satisfactory to bear in mind that the markets which are being opened up are markets for British industries, and that, though Governments are not philanthropic institutions, the outlay of the taxpayers' money has resulted in the suppression of a vast slave trade, and the cessation of the worst and most extensive slave-raiding system in Africa."

We close this necessarily inadequate notice of a remarkable Report, which will well repay very careful reading, with two extracts from its pages, in which Sir Frederick Lugard justifies his "forcible" methods, and attempts to show that he has destroyed only in order to build up—or to vary the metaphor—that he has used the surgeon's knife only in order to eradicate deadly evils from the body politic, and then restore it to healthy conditions.

"Though it would seem to be of late somewhat the fashion to scoff at forcible measures undertaken for suppressing slave raiding, I venture to say that in the last three years the results achieved in this direction in Nigeria have been effective, and attended probably by less bloodshed than perhaps fifty years of dhow-catching on the east coast, for which a large sum was yearly voted by Parliament, estimated, I believe, at not less than £200,000 per annum. If the British taxpayer likes to have 'something to show for his money,' I think he may rest assured that his contributions have not been ill-spent in Northern Nigeria, and have already produced an amelioration in the condition of the people which cannot be expressed in terms of £ s. d., while the future promises well for his trade."

The second extract relates to the conquest of the Fulani country :—

"The British conquest of this vast country has been almost bloodless ; the people have welcomed our advent. But in my view the tradition of British rule has ever been to arrest disintegration, to retain and build up again what is best in the social and political organization of the conquered dynasties, and to develop on the lines of its own individuality each separate race of which our great Empire consists. That has been our policy in India ; and Northern Nigeria, though but a third the size, and many centuries behind the great Eastern dependency, still presents to my imagination many strangely parallel conditions. I believe myself that the future of the virile races of this Protectorate lies largely in the regeneration of the Fulani. Their ceremonial, their coloured skins, their mode of life and habits of thought, appeal more to the native populations than the prosaic business-like habits of the Anglo-Saxon can ever do. Nor have we the means at present to administer so vast a country. This, then, is the policy to which, in my view, the administration of Northern Nigeria should give effect, viz., to regenerate this capable race and mould them to ideas of justice and mercy, so that in a future generation, if not in this, they may become worthy instruments of rule."

## LETTER FROM SIR F. D. LUGARD.

We are fortunate to be able to add to the important information given in the official despatches some extracts from a letter written by Sir F. D. Lugard to the Anti-Slavery Society at the close of last year from the River Niger, as he was on his way back to his post. The letter dealt with a French article on "Slavery on the Niger," which we had submitted to the High Commissioner, asking him how far, in his opinion, the statements as to slavery made in it could be sustained at the present time. We are glad to learn that he considers the article is of old date, and that many of the charges are exaggerated, so far as they refer to Northern Nigeria.

We omit the detailed comments on the French article, and give the more general facts stated in the letter regarding slavery and slave raiding, which are of considerable interest.

For what has been done by Government Sir F. D. Lugard refers us to his own Annual Reports, *passim*.

"I hope, before long, to be able to find time to write a Memo. on what has been done on the Slavery question in Northern Nigeria in these four years, and to give some figures of the numbers liberated, those cared for and taught in the Freed Slave Home, the legislation initiated, etc. It would take some time to do this, which I have not at present at my disposal. I think that the result achieved by Officers of Northern Nigeria in these four years may probably compare with those achieved by Gordon in the Soudan in the same period over a similar area. I know of no other comparison."

"Slave raiding in organized bands may be said to have ceased throughout the length and breadth of Northern Nigeria.

"Slaves are set free by the Provincial Courts of each of the sixteen Provinces if any cruelty or ill-treatment is proved, and all newly enslaved persons are freed. Enslavers receive sentences of imprisonment in those Courts constantly. The country is vast—323,000 square miles—one-third the size of India, one and a half times as large as France, with a population of many millions. The Military Force is small, and the Civil Staff only a mere handful, and means of transport non-existent. Under these circumstances the results achieved are striking.

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"Agricultural slaves are rather serfs than slaves, are well treated, and have many rights. The Koranic law is liberal in its legislation on behalf of domestic slaves, and the Alkaljis, or Native Judges, enforce it as a rule. . . . .

"Though much oppression and much that is deplorable still exists in this vast country, any raiding or any of the horrors described have only to be brought to the notice of Government to be suppressed. Civil officers are constantly touring through their provinces, putting down all forms of oppression, and every living soul, slave or free, has access to them, and has the advantage of British Justice in a British Court. Some wild pagans, in inaccessible hills and forests north and south of the Benue and in other places, still remain unvisited by Officers of Government, because it would require a powerful force to enter their country, and any white man who did so would be killed. In the course of time I hope the *Pax Britannica* will extend over these areas too, and inhuman practices be stopped. . . . .

"The subject of African Slavery is one in which I have for so many years taken the keenest interest, and on which, perhaps, I have an exceptional experience, that I cordially welcome all the publicity which the Press can give to truthful and thoughtful statements which may aid in awakening and concentrating public interest on this matter. Of late years it has become the fashion to dub any forcible suppression of slave-raiding a 'punitive expedition,' a term which is rightly an unpopular one. I would also like to see full and accurate statements of the attitude of France and Germany in the Hinterland of their African possessions towards slavery at the present day."

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## Uganda.

### PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.\*

THE general report of the Protectorate for the year ending with March, 1903, which was issued at the close of the year, gives a favourable impression of steady progress made.

The Commissioner, Col. Hayes Sadler, writes :—

"To those whose work lay during the dark and anxious days of the rebellion and the mutiny are due the results which are now apparent in the Uganda of to-day, results which render the work of present-day government comparatively easy, and as free from anxiety on account of serious trouble as it is interesting and pleasant. Tyranny and oppression have been put down, and peace and order have been firmly established over the settled portions of the Protectorate, and laws and regulations enacted giving equal justice to all ; in the kingdom of Uganda the Chiefs and landholders have been awarded estates, which yet remain to be demarcated by the survey, and in the lesser kingdoms of Unyoro, Toro, and Ankole, the people have settled down to the peaceful cultivation of their lands ; trade and cultivation have been freed from the restrictions under which they suffered, and inter-communication between provinces, impossible a few years ago, is now a matter of ordinary daily occurrence ; the fact that natives of, say, Ankole and Unyoro can move as freely through Uganda and other parts of the Protectorate as in their own country strikes them as perhaps the most direct evidence of our rule ; the carrying of arms is rapidly being discontinued ; it is rare now that one sees weapons in the more settled districts, and caravans of porters pass from Busoga in the east to Toro in the west without escort and without fear of molestation.

"As all who have written on and visited Uganda will testify, the change which has come over the country since our occupation is extraordinary ; a great work has been done, and, whether this be viewed with the eyes of a politician or a philanthropist, it is work of which the nation may well be proud, and which we hold as an asset till the time comes when the Protectorate, by the development of its resources, relieves the British taxpayer of all cost of its administration.

"Passing to the year under report, I am glad to say that it has been one of unbroken quiet, free from internal disturbance ; the Government has accordingly been able to devote its energies to progress in the different branches of civil administration. Its attention has been principally directed to the preservation of the peace already established, the collection of revenue with the least hardship to

\* Africa No. 15 (1903).

the taxpayer, the encouragement of trade and agriculture, and the passing of enactments calculated to promote the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the country. In all this some substantial progress has been made ; we have, however, been much handicapped by the epidemic of sleeping sickness, which has wrought such a sad havoc in the populous districts adjoining the Victoria Nyanza. Our revenue has been adversely affected thereby, and the general advancement of the country in a measure retarded.

"In only one instance was a display of force necessary."

#### LABOUR.

In view of the proposal last year to procure labourers for the Rand mines from Uganda, we notice with interest the Commissioner's statement that "it is undesirable at any time to take the people for long distances from their homes, and the measures rendered necessary by the sleeping sickness epidemic will further restrict the area from which labour was available for our principal works."

#### THE SLEEPING SICKNESS.

This dreaded disease has unfortunately been terribly prevalent during the year, and a special inquiry has been made into its nature, which show it to be a human tsetse fly disease. So far no remedy has been discovered.

#### GENERAL.

"In civilization and general well-being progress has been made. The Chiefs are taking more readily to Western methods in the conduct of their affairs, and evince a desire to adapt themselves more and more to the higher conditions of life which have been introduced among them. The visit of the Katikiro Apolo to England, where he had the honour of being present at His Majesty's Coronation, has been productive of good ; on his return his account of the places he visited, and his descriptions of our arts and manufactures, railways, and the scenes of daily life he witnessed, were listened to with the keenest interest. . . . Among the people there has been quiet and contentment, and patience under a deadly epidemic. . . . Trade has increased considerably and an impetus has been given to cultivation and agriculture throughout the Protectorate ; peace and order have been maintained ; there is a marked absence of the more serious forms of crime, and life and property are as safe to-day as in any portion of His Majesty's dominions."

## Southern Nigeria.

#### PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.\*

THE Report of the Acting High Commissioner, Mr. L. Probyn, for the year 1902 was issued at the end of last year, and opens with an important reference to the work accomplished in putting down slave-dealing and raiding, which we transcribe :—

"During the year 1902 the Protectorate was freed for ever from the evils of slave-raiding and slave-dealing on an organized scale. On April 1st, 1901, 'The Slave Dealing Proclamation' was published, and on the 26th November, 1901, the provisions of that law, making slave-dealing in all its

forms a penal offence, were applied by Order to all parts of the Protectorate; but it was not until the termination, in April, 1902, of the successful military operations in the Aro country, that the system of tribal warfare, for the purpose of making slaves, could be accurately regarded as an evil of the past.

"The southern part of the Protectorate is a delta country through the low lands of which the Ossay, Niger, Engenni, Opobo, and Cross rivers force their way through winding sluggish creeks to the sea. At a distance varying from 40 to 70 miles from the coast, higher land is met, the zone on which the oil palm flourishes is passed, and the country, undulating for the most part, but in many places very hilly, stretches northward to the boundary with the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, which runs east and west at a distance of 180 miles from the sea. Slave-raiding had been repressed for many years previous to 1902 in the delta country and in all the hinterland above described, except that part of the latter which lies between the Niger and the Cross River (a distance of 100 miles), and it was throughout this region that the Aro influence was predominant.

"The most noteworthy fact brought to light by the military operations in the last stronghold of slavery above described, was that the Aros were not a military race, and that their influence was due to their relatively great intelligence, as compared with other native tribes. The strength of this influence was such, that not only was it paramount in the Aro country, but was also felt in many places in the delta region between the Niger and the Cross River, and also to the east of the latter. Whenever a tribe attempted to avoid acting in accordance with the Aro policy, it was fought by warlike tribes under the direction of the Aros, who recompensed such mercenaries by allowing them to loot the conquered tribe and to seize and sell as slaves those who survived the conflict. Within the area of the direct Aro influence, no important dispute could be settled save by reference to the oracle in the Juju or sacred grove situated in a ravine near Ibun (Aro Chuku). Each of the contending parties attempted to propitiate this oracle by large offerings, and the party against whom judgment was pronounced, was believed by his tribes to have been destroyed by the hidden power, while, in reality, he was almost invariably sold secretly into slavery. As the tribe supposed to be specially favoured by this oracle, the Aros were able to gain wealth in the shape both of propitiatory offerings and of slaves. In addition to being a constant source of wealth, the Juju oracle also afforded the Aros a means whereby any one opposing or supposed to be desirous of opposing their authority could be easily removed, as they could at any time contrive that a charge should be made against the rebel, thus forcing him to appeal to the oracle, and then, on his arrival at Ibun, he would either be made powerless through parting with all his wealth as an offering, or, if his gifts were insufficient, his doom would be pronounced by Aro priests hidden in a concealed cave in the sacred ravine, and thereafter the Aro opponent became the Aro slave.

"The military operations which were brought to a successful close in 1902, destroyed the system of slave-making above described, and the dreaded Juju oracle ceased for ever to exercise its baneful influence. The Aros themselves, however, were not destroyed, but, on the contrary, immediately gave further proof of their intelligence by adapting themselves to the new conditions of life. It had been their practice to prevent tribes within their influence from attempting to do a direct trade with the delta country, and thus they alone had experience in trade. They at once began to utilize this experience, they readily learnt to appreciate the superior value of English currency, as compared with the native mediums of

barter, manillas, brass rods, etc., and, by their activity, showed that for many years they would be probably the principal gainers in any increased trade which might result from their country having been thrown open to the delta traders.

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### The Situation in Benadir.

THE Benadir Chartered Company has informed the Italian Government that the measures lately taken to put down slavery have led to a revolt of the native tribes, for the suppression of which 10,000 troops will be necessary. The caravan roads are closed and the Customs duties, upon which the colony depends, are cut off. It is rumoured that the Company, in consequence, threatens to throw up the management of Benadir.

It is pointed out, however, on the other hand, that the terms of the Convention of 1898, under which the Benadir Company obtained its Charter, included an undertaking to enforce the General Acts of Berlin and Brussels in respect of the slave trade, and that the difficulties which have occurred have arisen from the Company's neglect of its duties.

In April last the Foreign Minister stated in the Italian Chamber of Deputies that the Company had been too much preoccupied with the idea of not risking its capital and of safeguarding its shareholders' interests to carry out the work of civilization; it was not to be expected that the Company should have entirely banished slavery from the social system, but it had not even troubled to carry out such measures as would have brought about the virtual suppression of slavery, and this—the Minister said—was unpardonable.

In consequence of the agitation on the subject in Italy and the inquiry which took place after these facts became known last year, measures were taken to put down slave-trading in Benadir, and it is hardly to be wondered at that these measures should have produced some inconvenience and temporary dislocation of the commerce of the country, slaves being to a large degree the medium of exchange in the interior. The diminution of the caravan trade and proportional decrease of receipts from Customs dues is a not unnatural result of the action which has been taken.

The Secretary of the Italian Anti-Slavery Society has written to the Press to the effect that for some time past there has been unrest among the Benadir natives caused by emissaries of the so-called "Mad Mullah" who were carrying out a propaganda in his interest. To ascribe this ferment to what has been recently done to check slavery is, says the Secretary, more than an exaggeration.

The following facts are taken from a lecture given in Rome under the auspices of the Italian Anti-Slavery Society by Dr. Carlo Mucciarelli who was for three years resident in Benadir as Medical Officer to the Company:—

Until the occupation of the neighbouring coast districts by the English and Germans, the chief importation of slaves was by sea, and they belonged to certain tribes of South East Africa from about the Great Lakes. Now that the entrance by

sea is impossible they are introduced overland and are all of Galla race—specially Boran.

The inquiries made this year by the Consul at Zanzibar and the Commander of the *Volturro* have proved the arrival of such slaves at all the coast towns (into the interior it is almost impossible for foreigners to penetrate).

The resident at Brava, Lieutenant Bossi, wrote in 1903.—“At Brava the slave trade has never been prohibited and we are giving our sanction to it by legalizing the sales.”

Doctor Mucciarelli says :—

“The children of slaves are slaves. If a freeman wishes to marry a slave woman he must make a sworn compact that the children shall be the slaves of the woman’s master.

“Slaves are sold by verbal contract in the presence of witnesses, as cattle are sold with us in Italy. A written contract is rarely used. There is a register kept in Arabic and another in Italian. Let us hope that no Italian hand will lend itself in future to such work. It seems now that for some months this registration has been prohibited with the exaction of a fine.

“Even Italians hire slaves, paying the owner about 4 francs a month.

“The prices of slaves are as follows :—

A boy or girl -	80 francs.
A young woman -	about 280 francs.
A young man -	“ 200 francs.

“These hired slaves have to pay a tribute to their masters fixed by the Government (for the capital) at 4 *bezza* a day.

“This is a very heavy tribute considering that a woman at fixed wages, a water-carrier for example, earns only 8 *bezza* a day, a free workwoman 11 *bezza*. What remains of her earnings is not sufficient to clothe and feed herself and her children, and she is forced to procure it in another way. The *bezza* is worth about two centimes. At the request of the owner the slave who does not pay is put into prison in irons.

“A Galla slave woman, Elèma, sister-in-law of the Governor’s cook, was kept three days in prison for not paying the tribute. She was then called before the tribunal and condemned to pay 6 *bezza* daily instead of 4. The unfortunate woman protested that, working the whole day, she could not earn more than 4 *bezza*, but her plea was useless. She came out of the tribunal invoking God with loud cries, ‘Is there a God? Is there a God?’ she cried. I was acquainted with the fact through the pity it had inspired among the Arabs themselves.

“It is easy to imagine the coercive measures that the owner can use upon his slaves; from childhood they are accustomed to ill-treatment, and to being considered mere cattle, and from this they derive a timidity of character which prevents them from rebelling or seeking redress through the whites who are in the country. It is most difficult for them to approach strangers, and to appeal to the local tribunals which are wholly composed of slave-holders would be entirely fruitless.”

At a few kilometres from Mogadiscio M. Révoil, the only living European who has been at Gheledi, saw slaves working with chains on both feet, a cord from the waistband attached to the irons to lessen the weight on the legs.

Doctor Mucciarelli himself treated a slave who came to him with a large wound on the left leg and foot produced by a broad iron ring which he wore perpetually. It had produced a deep furrowed wound, and the foot was quite deformed. His whole body was covered with cicatrices caused by beatings with burning brands ; this was con-

firmed by the overseer, who said it had been done by way of punishment. This slave entreated that he might not be forced to return to his master; the doctor wrote to the authorities, but the slave was sent back. One shudders to think what he may have suffered at the hands of those who were accustomed to chastise him with brands hot from the fire. This happened in March, 1903, just after all Italy had been moved by the occurrences in Benadir.

There are three or four International Treaties forbidding the restitution of slaves, and making it obligatory to maintain in every station where there are white men an institution to protect and defend them, but these clauses are not observed.

The administration of Benadir was ceded by the Sultan of Zanzibar with the understanding that his laws in regard to slavery should be respected. In 1889 he had declared freedom to all who entered his territories; in 1890 he proclaimed freedom to every child of a slave; in 1897 he extended this freedom to the few slaves who remained, and prohibited all dealing in slaves. The holding of slaves in Benadir is therefore contrary not only to every sentiment of humanity and civilization, but contrary to the treaties. Many of them were bought and sold under contract when they were legally free; when they paid the tribute fixed by Government, they paid it against all right and justice. The legal consequences therefore are most serious.

The Doctor in September 1902, demanded of the Government that a stop should be put to this state of things; he wrote:—‘The Company is kept in the dark in all these matters, the honour of our country is concerned, it is needful that the reform should come from the Company and from the Government, etc.’

‘It shall be looked into’ was the reply. Two inquiries were made, and the atrocious facts were fully proved. The Italian Benadir Company have resolved to spend 27,000 francs for the liberation of slaves, but this sum is quite inadequate as in the towns of Brava, Merca and Mogadiscio alone there are 3,000, and in the whole district they may be calculated at about 5,000. The immediate liberation of the slaves is absolutely necessary and the Government should co-operate with the Company, seeing that both have been deplorably and culpably negligent.

Dr. Mucciarelli concludes by pointing out that the liberation of the slaves would strengthen the hands of the missionaries who are preaching the equality and brotherhood of man, in contradistinction to the Musulman teaching of slavery and hatred.

### Review.

DAL BENADIR.

By SIGNOR ROBECCHI BRICCHETTI.\*

SIGNOR ROBECCHI BRICCHETTI, the African explorer, has published in this volume the letters that he addressed to the President of the Italian Anti-Slavery Society from Benadir, where he had gone to investigate the alleged slavery scandals. He narrates how he, a shareholder in the Benadir Society, took the opportunity, at the Company's next general meeting (27th January, 1903), to bring to the Board's notice the reports current on the subject, in the expectation that the entire meeting would censure the continued existence of slavery; but

\* Milan, 1904.

he was disappointed. The Board declared themselves ignorant of the facts brought forward by Signor Robecchi, whose statements, they maintained in a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had been valued at their true worth by the shareholders. A high official at the said Ministry also told Signor Robecchi that his facts were inventions. However, the Company's annual report, signed by Signor Carminati, recognized the existence of slavery in the Colony, declaring it to be inevitable. Signor Robecchi then decided to go and witness the facts for himself, instead of carrying out a projected journey to South Africa. So he applied for letters of introduction to the Society's President, Count Sanseverino; but this gentleman made so many difficulties that Signor Robecchi requested Signor Chiesi, a member of the Italian Parliament, to obtain for him an official introduction from Signor Morin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Here he was equally unsuccessful. He then decided to start for Africa, hoping that the said introductions might then perhaps be sent after him; but this turned out not to be the case, and, on reaching Aden, he read in the newspapers that the Benadir Company meant to prevent him from landing in their dominion, from the fear of the risks he might run in that unsafe country! However, he went on as soon as possible to Mogadiscio, which he reached on April 13th. Here, contrary to his expectations, he was received with much courtesy by the Governor, Signor Dulio, who afforded him every opportunity for carrying out his investigations. He had some difficulty in so doing, because every one seemed to have entered into a conspiracy of silence. He found, however, that the tales of horror published by the Italian Press were in no way exaggerated. The sale (and even the export) of slaves is openly carried on at Mogadiscio; the sale and mortgage contracts are inserted in official registers, and a tax paid thereon. Signor Robecchi examined the registers himself, and quotes various slave contracts in full. In many contracts for the word "slave" is used the euphemism "quality of goods." Here is a contract from one of the registers, in which every transaction is noted by the Society's cashier, Mazzucchelli:—N. o. 184. Rabi II. 1319 (1901). Sale of a female slave by Achmed Mohamed Ali to Said Suliman. Price, 70 dollars. Tax, 1 dollar.

Signor Robecchi also narrates several episodes that illustrate the revolting ill-treatment that the slaves sometimes get at the hands of their masters. He ascertained that, in Mogadiscio, out of a population of 6,695 persons, 2,095 are slaves. This anomalous state of affairs is greatly due to the fact that "administrative anarchy" prevails in Benadir. The actual Administration is a mere custom-house that contents itself with collecting the import and export duties. The local Residents declare that it is not for them, but for the Governor, to enforce the decisions of the Brussels Conference; the Governor attributes this function to the Consul-General at Zanzibar, who, in his turn, throws the blame on the Society, that in its turn throws the blame on the Italian Government. The Governor, Dulio, is a timid man, afraid of doing anything which might raise an insurrection, and dependent on his interpreter, Achmed Fahija (described by Signor Robecchi as his former interpreter and as a perfect

scoundrel), who himself deals in slaves, and who told Signor Robecchi that, in order to escape Italian observation, slaves are sent sometimes to be sold at Warsheikh, beyond the Italian sphere. This man gave Signor Robecchi a list of the prices current for slaves in Mogadiscio ; the Suaheli slaves fetch more than do the Galla. The work of agriculture is chiefly done by the slaves. Signor Robecchi observed that the quality of the work done by slaves is very inferior to that produced by free labour ; and, quoting the observed fact that the value of the work done by a free labourer is three times that of a slave's labour, he estimates that, were slavery abolished, the value of Benadir would be tripled. The country is not devoid of resources. The appearance of the country from the sea is not inviting ; the coast is fringed by a chain of low sandhills ; but behind these sandhills, at a short distance, there lies the very fertile valley of the Uebi Scebeli. The coast is lined with harbours, that give it its name (in Arabic, "benadir" is the plural of "bender" = landing-place). So, owing to its remarkable geographical situation, this district has been from time immemorial a centre of commerce. The Somali, its inhabitants, of Arabic descent, are not very apt at agriculture, preferring the occupations of pasturage and especially of trade, in which they show themselves keen-witted ; they also produce certain manufactures. They are devout Mussulmans, and, even in the Italian districts, the natives are under the jurisdiction of native "cadis" (generally slave-owners and dealers) who administer according to the rules of the "Cheriat" (Mussulman code of law). This code recognizes the existence of slavery. Seeing how deeply rooted this institution is in the life of the people, Signor Robecchi does not advise its immediate abolition by decree, without compensation. To quote his words :—

"A profound student of human nature has said that men would rather be struck in their persons than in their wealth ; this will enable one easily to understand how difficult it may be to get a people to consent to the abolition of slavery, when so civilizing a measure can be accomplished only by going counter to their material interests as well as their religious sentiments. Taking this into consideration, it would be a weak policy to issue a Decree proclaiming the abolition of slavery, without first taking steps to carry out economic reforms that would tend to make good the material losses that would be inflicted by the proclamation of the abolition of slavery. There must also be some true effort at colonization, to be concerted by the Society and Government conjointly. Then, when the labour of the slave has been superseded by that of the adequately remunerated free man, Italy will have accomplished what is most needed to put an end to slavery."

The capacities that are latent in the races from which the slaves are drawn are illustrated by the history of two small States founded by freed and runaway slaves—the Sultanate of Goscia and the Republic of Hawai. Goscia was founded by a slave, who rendered his master such good service that he obtained his liberty. After some years of struggle, he, assisted by a number of runaway slaves, finally established a settlement on the banks of the Juba. The Sultanate of Goscia was frequently attacked, but always came out victoriously ; and it now

carries on a flourishing business with the coast, and has formed agreements with the English and Italian Governments. The Republic of Hawai, in the basin of the Scebeli, east of Brava, lies in the midst of the bush, and is reached by paths (for which guides are required) that lead to a thick and tall barrier of brambles, which the people of Hawai have erected round their territory. The few openings in this wall are hemmed in by large beams that render passage difficult. The inhabitants are all runaway slaves. The founder of the community was one Makarane, who (a new Spartacus) rebelled against his master, and was joined by his fellow-slaves. They escaped, and Makarane, assisted by two other slaves, established the community of Hawai, the fame of which spread, so that many others found their way there, and were received with open arms. They swore to live and die free ; and were successful in repelling all aggression from the outside. Signor Robecchi says that the first impression the people of Hawai leave on the traveller is one of repulsion, for they still show the effect of the ill-treatment they formerly had to undergo, but this impression is promptly effaced by their courtesy and kindness. They number about 3,000, spread over six villages. They have created a kind of Utopia. There are chiefs, who must be absolutely obeyed, under pain of expulsion. Work is compulsory. At death, a man's goods are divided among the inhabitants of his village ; his children receive no more than any other villager. The Benadir authorities have already entered into relations with the people of Hawai, and Signor Robecchi considers that they should do so still more ; if so, there would be a great development of commerce with Brava. This city is the pleasantest and best-governed in Benadir ; its Resident is one of the few officials who are equal to their work. However, Signor Robecchi, who is extremely fair-minded, explains that great allowances must be made for the Italian officials, as well as for the Benadir Company, which, insufficiently provided with capital, had to take over a district (where slavery and every form of barbarism were rampant) from the Italian Government, that had done absolutely nothing to subdue it. Signor Robecchi, who visited the country when it was first annexed—he gives a complete account of what happened then and of what has taken place since)—declares that, even under the Company's inefficient administration, a great improvement has taken place. His presence in the country led to an explosion of energy on the part of Signor Dulio and the other officials ; an anti-slavery decree was issued, and many slaves were released, some by Signor Robecchi himself. Fac-similes of various acts of manumission are published in the book, as well as a census of the slaves and of their owners in the chief centres, as also of those who have been freed. Among the illustrations with which the book is profusely adorned, are several representing the chains worn by the slaves at work. Signor Robecchi exhibited a collection of these chains at a meeting of the Benadir Company, held at Milan when he returned, on which occasion it was decided to take serious steps to put down slavery. In this connection, Signor Robecchi quotes with great approval the measures which the Germans in East Africa have adopted for repressing slavery. He mentions Abyssinia as an important slave market. In *Dal Benadir*

Signor Robecchi has produced a masterly book, which affords us yet another opportunity of appreciating the admirable terseness of Italian prose, so difficult to render in English; and the lucidity, impartiality and profound knowledge displayed by the author has called forth the high approval of the Italian Press, notably of the *Avvenire d'Italia* of Bologna, and of the *Giornale d'Italia* of Romé.

P. W. M.

### ANGOLA SLAVERY.

News of the treatment of natives in Angola has reached the Spanish Press as appears from the following paragraph from a Madrid paper, *Diario Universal*, of January 4th.

Communication from the Portuguese frontier to the Fabra Agency:—

The Press is censuring the continued existence in Angola of a real slavery which has only changed its name. The purchase of blacks is called *ajuste* (adjustment), and their transport to other districts *emigracion* (emigration).

Several papers add that trials take place in which the losers are condemned to the payment of a certain number of blacks who figure in account books and other documents under the name of *volumenes* (volumes).

### Slave Trading in the Persian Gulf.

IN one of a series of articles in *The Times*, written by a correspondent who has accompanied the Viceroy of India on his recent tour in the Persian Gulf, the writer remarks:—

"It has taken the best part of a century to hunt down piracy and the slave trade, and to-day the only refuge left to the last remnants of outlawry is in such territorial waters as lie beyond the reach of the British warships' guns."

This would seem to give rather too favourable an impression of the result of the British efforts to put down slave trading in the Persian Gulf, as in almost every annual report of the International Zanzibar Bureau and in the despatches of naval officers in the district, we read of the markets for slaves which exist at Muscat and in other places on the coasts of the Gulf where slaves fetch a high price, and which constitute a main reason for the continuance of the traffic. We still read of an active trade carried on by Arabs in this part. Last year British warships which had been keeping watch for the slave dhows and pirate ships which infest these waters were engaged in fighting with dhows, in the course of which one bluejacket was killed and others were wounded.

We are glad to read the following allusion to the abuse of the French flag in these seas for covering illicit trade in slaves and arms, as our readers know that this is an evil which has existed for many years—owing to the unfortunate French sensitiveness on the point—practically unchecked, and we have very often drawn attention to it.

The correspondent of *The Times* states that an agreement has recently been reached whereby this question is to be referred to the Hague Court of Arbitration, so that it would, he remarks, be invidious to lay too much stress upon the difficulties which the action of France has from time to time raised.

"The French claim to exercise protection even in the territorial waters of the Sultan over native dhows which in the course of a more or less questionable trade with the east coast of Africa have obtained from the French authorities, chiefly at Obok and Jibuti, permission to fly the tricolour is, indeed, one which does not affect merely the sovereign rights of Muscat, but the peace and tranquillity of neighbouring countries. For it is beyond dispute that the privilege of flying the French flag is in most cases sought and acquired for the sole purpose of covering an illicit trade, either in slaves or in arms, and often in both, of which the pernicious effects are felt all over the Gulf. That under cover of a foreign flag—and that flag the flag of a civilized and generous nation, which is publicly pledged to the repression of such unlawful practices—the territorial waters of a native ruler, who has loyally conformed his policy in these matters to the higher standards of Western morality, should be used by his own subjects in defiance of his authority for slave running or for the unlawful importation of arms, both equally prohibited under his own and under international law, is, to say the least, an anomaly which the most skilful of special pleaders will find it hard to justify. Yet, this was, in substance, the claim, when shorn of its diplomatic embellishments, which the French flagship *Infernet* was sent to Muscat only last spring to vindicate under threats of actual coercion. The Sultan naturally appealed to us, as he has always done in his hour of need, and the cordial relations, which have been so happily restored of late between France and Great Britain, no doubt helped to incline the French Government to a friendly consideration of Lord Lansdowne's representations. The question of principle is to be referred to The Hague, and though Seyid Feysul was not a little incensed at having in the meantime to satisfy, at the expense of his own prestige, the local *amour propre* of the French authorities by remitting, in deference to the French flag which covered them, the terms of punishment incurred by his refractory subjects, he has loyally accepted this solution of a difficulty which he may perhaps be allowed to hold should never have arisen."

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### Obituary.

WE much regret, as we are going to press, to see the announcement of the death of SIR JOHN SCOTT, on March 1. Sir J. Scott, who was best known for his important work in connection with Native Courts in Egypt, has been a member of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society since the beginning of 1899. We hope to give a brief notice of Sir J. Scott's life in our next issue.

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### TITLE AND INDEX.

COPIES of the Title-page and Index to Vol. XXIII. of the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (1903) may be obtained on application at the Offices of the Society.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN  
ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

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**Annual General Meeting**

OF

SUBSCRIBERS AND FRIENDS

WILL BE HELD (BY THE KINDNESS

OF THE PRESIDENT) AT

2, PRINCE'S GATE, S.W.,

ON

**FRIDAY APRIL 15th, at 4 p.m.**

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CHAIRMAN:—

SIR T. FOWELL BUXTON, Bart., G.C.M.G. (President).

LITTLE AND LIDGEZ